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OBSERVATIONS,

ON THE

RECONCILIATION

OF

GREAT-BRITAIN,

AND THE

COLONIES,

IN WHICH ARE EXHIBITED ARGUMENTS
FOR, AND AGAINST, THAT MEASURE.

By a FRIEND of AMERICAN LIBERTY.

Salus Populi suprema lex esto.

Let the GOOD of the PEOPLE, be the Foundation
of all LAW, and CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

PHILADELPHIA;

Printed, by ROBERT BELL, in Third-Street.

MDCCLXXVI.



T O T H E R E A D E R.

THE Substance of the following Piece was drawn up by a Friend to American Liberty, to oblige a few of his Friends, some of whom were for, and others against a Reconciliation with Great-Britain ; they on both Sides freely perused it in Manuscript, and as the principal Subject of it is become a general Subject of Conversation, is in itself very important, and ought to be deliberately weighed before 'tis determined ; it appeared to some of the Persons into whose hands the Manuscript had fallen, that it would be proper to have it laid before the Public ; accordingly they sent it to the Printer. And though this is chiefly on one Side of the Question, yet they would be willing to see the Arguments on the other Side calmly and rationally urged, and the Subject set to View in its full Light.

As a Matter of such Importance should be well weighed before its determined, and cannot be well weighed and considered, unless the Reasons on both Sides are properly viewed ; 'tis proper the Reasons on both Sides should be fairly exhibited.

Just Printed, Published, and now selling, By R. BELL,
in Third Street, Philadelphia; (Price Three Shillings.)

PLAIN TRUTH; Addressed to the Inhabitants
of AMERICA, containing, Remarks on a late
Pamphlet, entitled COMMON SENSE: wherein
are shewn, that the Scheme of Independence is Ruinous,
Delusive, and Impracticable: That were the Author's
Asserations, Respecting the Power of AMERICA,
as Real as Nugatory; Reconciliation on liberal Principles
with GREAT BRITAIN, would be exalted Policy:
And that circumstanced as we are, Permanent Liberty;
and True Happiness, can only be obtained by Réconcili-
ation with that Kingdom.

Written by CANDIDUS.

Will ye turn from flattery and attend to this Side?

There Truth, unlicenc'd, walks; and dares accost
Even Kings themselves, the Monarchs of the Free!

THOMSON on the Liberties of Britain.

N. B. To this Pamphlet, is subjoined a Defence of the
Liberty of the PRESS, by the sagacious and patriotic
JUNIUS, Author of the celebrated FREE LETTERS,
to his present Majesty, and his Ministers.

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ADITIONS to PLAIN TRUTH;
Addressed to the Inhabitants of AMERICA,
containing further Remarks on a late Pamphlet, entitled
COMMON SENSE, wherein are fully shewn,
that AMERICAN Independence, is as illusory, ruinous,
and impracticable, as a liberal reconciliation with
GREAT BRITAIN, is safe, honorable, and expedient.

WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR OF PLAIN TRUTH.

The enjoyment of Liberty, and even its support and
preservation, consists, in every man's being allowed
to speak his thoughts, and lay open his sentiments.

*Quotation of the American Congress, in their Address to
the Inhabitants of Quebec from that friend to Mankind,
MONTESSQUIEU.*

N. B. To this Pamphlet, is annexed for the informa-
tion of all AMERICANS, who wish to know,
and to enjoy, the very LAWS and PRIVILEGES,
which themselves have decreed, A Defence of the
Liberty of the PRESS, by the HONORABLE,
The CONTINENTAL CONGRESS.

MEMORANDUM. If to Preserve, any Part of the
WORKS of valuable WRITERS, hath always
been looked upon, as doing good Service to the PUBLIC;
The EDITOR hereof may hope, that his present
endeavours will prove acceptable, at least, to all the
lovers of FREEDOM, who are so consistent, as to
acknowledge, that the PRESS ought to be free
for OTHERS, as well as for THEMSELVES.

O B S E R V A T I O N S
ON THE
RECONCILIATION
OF
G R E A T - B R I T A I N
AND THE
C O L O N I E S.

A RECONCILIATION between Great Britain and the Colonies, has been much in the thoughts of the Americans. At the beginning of the war it was ardently desired in general, if not by all; but now it is not desired, but feared by many; and it has become a public inquiry whether it is best there should be a reconciliation, or a proper separation, and we in America be independent. It certainly must be agreeable to all rational people to have the war properly terminated. But how shall it be done? It certainly will be very difficult to heal the breach that has been made, and bring the war to a proper end and issue. It was begun, and has been carried on in such a manner, that the termination

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mination of it, must be peculiarly difficult. Whenever the settlement of our affairs is attempted, it should be with great deliberation and calmness. Self-interest, party spirit, heats and animosities should have no part in a matter of so great importance.

To terminate the present war, to determine the rights and privileges of America, and settle its civil government, is a most momentous affair. It is to do the work of ages; it should not be done suddenly. All possible light and assistance should be afforded to those that manage the business. It is really too much to trust to any number of men, as representatives, if it could possibly be avoided. If it was possible, it would be best the whole continent should give their voice in the matter; But a few no doubt must be trusted with this interesting concern; and they will doubtless find it a weight that they will be ready to groan under, if they are impartial and faithful men, as I trust they will be. It is so great an affair, that it should with caution be entrusted to any men. Their is danger of men. There is danger that they may be mistaken, or biased, or some way influenced to take a wrong measure. If Britain condescends to treat with America, by general congress, or any representatives of

ours,

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burs, she will no doubt use all possible art, proffer many favours, nor will her money be hid from those that are entrusted to settle the affair. In this view we have more reason to fear the money and favours of Britain, than her arms, and open opposition. Those have often done more fatal execution than these. But we have reason to hope: Our congress has done worthily. They have nobly exposed their lives and estates in the cause of liberty, and defence of their country; and shall they, or any others that may come in their room, give up our privileges? God forbid! I trust it will not be.

It was just now said, that if possible the whole continent should settle our affairs; but since it must be done by representatives, they should as much as possible know the minds of the people in general. For this reason among others, it should not be done hastily. Whenever an accommodation is proposed, it would be well for every country, if not city and town, to publish their views or sentiments of the thing, as was done respecting our liberties at the beginning of our present troubles. Then, almost every county, and many towns met and published their resolves, concerning our rights and privileges, which thing greatly tended to unite and strengthen the whole continent.

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continent. Something similar might be done now, or when matters are about to be settled.

The settlement of American government being as we hope for ages, or even to the end of time, we may well take time for it; use all proper means, and get all possible light. For this reason it might be proper, that a number of pieces should be published on the occasion, with calmness, temper and sound reasoning. There will be different sentiments, and which all may publish with candour, and offer their reasons fairly. The grand inquiry is, concerning the issue of the war; in what way and manner it must be accomplished, or attempted; or how we shall settle matters with Great Britain? And here an interesting and important inquiry occurs, viz. Shall we be reconciled to Great Britain, so as to be under her government, or shall we be independent? To determine this, another question arises, viz. Have we a right to be independent? We all believe an over-ruling providence; we have appealed and applied to God in our present struggle; we believe that the sovereign of the universe, the judge of all the earth, disposes of nations and kingdoms, and that sooner or later he will visit for iniquity. We have reason therefore

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therefore to view the equity of our proceedings, and inquire whether we have a right to be independent.

The question then is, Has Britain forfeited her right to our dependence, so that she cannot in justice claim it; nor we be under any obligation to submit to it? It is certain we were once dependent, and under British government; it is a proper enquiry then, How can we be independent? To know whether Britain has forfeited her right to our dependence, * we must a little consider the nature of civil government.— In a state of nature, as in the first ages of the world, or before mankind were formed into societies for civil government, every man had a right to enjoy himself, and the work of his hands, and what he took in hunting, &c. if he injured not any of his fellow creatures, who had the same right: And in that state of nature; each man had a right to defend and vindicate himself, if assaulted or injured by others. But when men were formed into civil societies, each man gave up this right to defend and vindicate himself, to judge and determine in his own case, and left all this to the civil magistrate; and the duty and proper business of the civil magistrate, was, is, and ever will

B

be

* See the appendix at the end.

be, to defend and protect the people, in the peaceable enjoyment of their properties and privileges.

The whole design of civil government or magistracy, is the good of the people. A magistrate as such, has no right or authority but from the people. It is true a man may in a tyrannical and arbitrary manner, assume power over others, and oblige them to submit, as has often been the case; and the people may think proper so to do; and this their submission may become a sort of compact, and the ruler and ruled be mutually bound to each other. But still the proper end and design of magistracy, is the good of the people, and in reason and equity it cannot be any thing else. This is so easy that I need not enlarge. A magistrate then by office, and by oath, if there is an oath in the case, is bound to defend his subjects in the enjoyment of their properties and privileges, and people are bound to him only in consequence of this, or in connection with it. To suppose otherwise would be to destroy all liberty and property, and to promote the most absolute tyranny; but I need not insist, for this is out of dispute.

To come to the case in hand then, let us suppose that Britain, or any other kingdom, had

had a part of its dominions, an island, or continent, lying at a distance, America for instance. That this should be attacked by a foreign enemy; upon which America cries to Britain the source of national power, for protection and defence. Britain regards not, protects not, but leaves them to the rage and fury of their enemy, by whom America is at length overcome and subdued, when Britain had it in her power to have afforded help, protected and saved them. After some time, by some means America extricates itself out of the hand of the enemy, and defends herself. Has Britain, after this, a right to govern America, and require submission to her authority? Would not Britain's right to American government and dependence be forfeited? The case is clear; Britain did not her duty to protect and defend, but left America to be subdued by another, and America is thereby entirely free from British authority.

Again, let us suppose a case, that when America had been thus attacked, and left destitute of British protection, America was not subdued by the enemy, but after a long struggle, while Britain had opportunity to interpose, but would not, the Americans should get the better of their enemies, though at a vast expence of blood and treasure,

sure; would America, after that, be under any obligation to submit to British authority? By no means. America had not the protection that was her due, but expended her own blood and treasure, and no thanks to Britain she was not wholly destroyed. Again, suppose that instead of leaving America to the degradations, of a foreign enemy, Britain herself should act the part of an enemy; refuse us the privileges which are ours by constitution, seize our properties, and deprive us of our mutual rights; in which case America expostulates, pleads, submits to all equitable impositions, which are according to constitution, begs she may be relieved, and not driven to extremities; but Britain proves deaf to entreaties, seizes our properties, and deprives us of our privileges, by which means America is obliged to defend herself, by force, which in the reason and nature of things, she has a right to do. That in this case we have a right to defend ourselves, is determined by the declaration and conduct of these colonies in the present struggle, therefore will not now be disputed by Americans.*

To proceed then; suppose in this struggle America should, after spilling much blood, and

* I do not pretend to reason with professed tories, but with those that allow, that we have righteously and properly taken up arms in our defence.

and expending much treasure, get the better of Britain and prevail till Britain chooses to cease hostilities : would America then be under obligation to submit to British government ? Every rational person would say, that Britain had forfeited her right to American dependence. There can be no more reason why we should submit to Britain, after she had acted the part of a cruel enemy herself, than if she had left America to the rage of a foreign enemy. Yea much less reason.

I have only one case more to suppose ; Should Britain proceed against America, as in the last supposition, till she had put us to much expence, shed much of our best blood, burnt our sea port towns, deprived us of our trade, and means of livelihood, but when she found it would not answer to proceed against us to bring things to a crisis by the sword, should propose a reconciliation, by our being under her government; are we obliged in justice to comply ? Has she a right to require it ? This is our case. What obliges us to submit to British goverment ! It is not for want of will and disposition, in her that she does not proceed against us to the utmost. She has endeavoured to crush us, and expected that what she has done would have accomplished it. Britain expected

expected by her armed force, the Fishery Bill, and others of the same cruel kind, by starving and blood shed, to have reduced us to an entire submission. She has acted directly contrary to all her obligations to protect and defend us, most unjustly pronounced us rebels, and treated us as such :* She proposed to bring the body of the people into subjection, and set the heads of some of the chiefs; upon Temple Bar. Let her dreadful and bloody treatment of us, against all our cries and petitions for lenity, a long time presented, appear in its proper light, and stand full in view, as it ought ; and in that view judge whether she has forfeited her right to our dependence and government, and whether it is necessary in point of equity for us to submit.

But if Britain has forfeited her right, and we are at liberty in point of equity to be

* And is still treating us as rebels. How strange is it that Britain should declare us rebels, seize our effects, and try every way to hurt us, at the same time that she proposes an accommodation, and appoints Commissioners to treat with us ! Is it not evident that the commission for an accomodation is nothing but a sham, designed to blind the people in England and keep them quiet, while they are made to believe, that the Americans have very generous terms of accomodation offered them, and also to give the tories among us, a covered opportunity to exert themselves and cause divisions ?

be independent ; yet it is a query whether it is prudent ; whether it will be best for us to assume our right, and whether on the whole we ought not yet to desire and endeavour to be in connection, and under the government of Great-Britain. I come therefore to view the arguments for and against our reconciliation with Great-Britain.

First Argument. However, we may view the thing, Britain will not give up her right to govern us, but will strenuously insist upon it, so that if we declare for independency, it will involve us in a long and bloody war, and be our utter ruin in the end ; especially as in this case our friends in Great Britain will forsake us, since most, if not all of them, have befriended us on supposition, that we will still be in subjection to Great-Britain. Our having so many friends in Great-Britain, is the reason that our enemies find themselves perplexed, and cannot so fully exert themselves against us ; if it is once found that we declare for independency, Britain will be united against us. Those that have been our friends will no longer embarrass our enemies, but Britain united, will exert herself against us, with such vigour, that we shall soon be overcome, or reduced to unknown difficulty.

Answer.

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Answer. Let Britain be ever so much united, she cannot victual out an army and fleet, and maintain them at this distance, so as to destroy, or reduce us to unknown difficulty. Should Britain, without foreign aid, attempt to fit out and victual an army of 25,000 men, and 10,000 sailors to guard our coast, it would cause such a scarcity among themselves as would be their ruin, now their trade is so diminished, and their importation of provisions from us cut off. But suppose they could and should do this; an army of 25,000, and 10,000 sailors, would by no means subdue us. We can raise five to one against this number. And should Britain call in foreign aid, as she must if she does any thing to purpose; that would induce us to do the same. And should we make application, we could soon have such assistance, that Britain could not prevail against us.

Second Argument. If we declare for Independence, Britain will not for time to come, protect us against other nations, and we should in time, and probably very soon, become a prey to the French or Spaniards, or some other enemy.

Answer. If we were once Independent, it would be the interest of all the European nations to keep us so. They would not let any

any one nation engross us and our trade, lest such an acquisition should enable that nation to be too powerful for its neighbours. Thus some small states in Europe are kept independent. The trade to North America would be such a boon to several European nations, that neither of them would let it be engrossed, or us be much hurt by another.

Third Argument. If we unite with Britain, we may have our expences refunded, and recover damages for our losses; but if we declare for independency, we shall lose all.

Answer. 1st, It is not in the disposition, or even in the power of Britain, to make good our damages. There are no such proposals by them, or like to be, therefore it cannot be used as an argument with any propriety. 2d, If Britain should consent to this, it would yet be much better for us to repair our own damages as well as we can, in a state of independency, than to have Britain repair them in a state of subjection to her. In a few years, it would be as cheap to us, our expences would be so much less, and our revenues so much greater in a state of independency.

Argument Fourth. Our independency would ruin Britain, and surely we cannot

be so cruel towards our Parent, though she has dealt something hardly with us.

Answer. 1st, Notwithstanding our independency, we may trade with Britain as much, if not more than with any kingdom in Europe; and if she will retrench her needless expences of placemen and pensioners, and the luxuries of the great, she may yet survive. With a proper part of our trade, and a reformation of her manners, Britain may subsist as well as some other kingdoms in Europe. 2d, We may by treaty agree to help, and defend Britain upon particular occasions, as need may require. 3d, If Britain is ruined, it is by her own misconduct, and we cannot help it. If she is ruined, it is because she is ripe for ruin, and God's judgments must come upon her; in which case we ought to be disunited, if we can, and not connected with her.

Argument Fifth. If we will not submit to a reconciliation with Britain, she will procure the French and Spaniards to join with her, to bring us into subjection, or destroy us. Britain would grant part of those provinces to the French and Spaniards, as a reward for helping to subdue the remainder, rather than we should be independent. And should Britain grant this, the French and Spaniards would soon help to conquer us.

Answer.

Answer. 1st, This is but a mere imagination, or rather a bug-bear to scare people that know no better. 2d, The French and Spaniards had much rather help America against Britain, than Britain against America. 3d, It would be much better for the French and Spaniards to have America independent, and they allowed a free trade with the whole continent, than for them to own a part of it, without a free trade. It would cost them much to guard and defend their part, which would probably be a bone of contention; whereas if we were independent, they would have the benefit of our trade without any cost. 4th, Should France and Spain join with Britain against us, we should apply to Holland, the King of Prussia, and other powers, which would bring on a general war in Europe, which would relieve us, so that we might continue independent. 5th, Against all such imaginary evil and danger as this argument supposes, or any that may possibly occur, we have this to support us, that our cause is good, and we have the Great Disposer of all things to confide in, and apply to. We have not run presumptuously into danger, nor are we proposing an independence that is unjust or unreasonable. What we propose is the most equitable, rational, natural

natural mode of civil government; most adapted to answer the ends of government, according to the word of God. A government most favourable to religion as well as liberty, and the natural rights of mankind. In this way we have abundant reason to think that God will smile upon and bless us; will prosper our equitable proceedings, and prevent the evils that earth or hell may devise against us.

Argument Sixth. The Congress has lately applied to Britain, and petitioned for a reconciliation, and therefore if Britain complies with our proposal, we cannot with honour and justice refuse to treat with her.

Answer. 1st, We may hold a treaty, and try to come to some proper agreement, as to trade; enter into a league offensive and defensive, and yet maintain our independence as to government. 2d, Our petition and offer of reconciliation, should be viewed only upon condition, that Britain would redress our grievances, repeal several acts of parliament, and place us in as good a condition as we were in 1763, which must imply making good our damages; which Britain is by no means likely to do. 3d, But the most proper answer to this argument is, that things are much altered since our petition last July, or the beginning of September,

September, when it was offered to the King. If our petition had been complied with, it ought to have been complied with immediately. It was offered in a critical time, we were then in the utmost danger, beset on all sides. Since that time much of our precious blood has been spilt; one of our best generals slain, several large towns burnt, and others cannonaded, beside immense cost. If we were held by that offer of the Congress, it ought to have been immediately complied with, or at least we should have been told that it would be considered as soon as possible; that it should be laid before the parliament as soon as they met. But instead of this, we were told that no answer would be given, and there was not a word of it in the King's speech to the parliament, framed by the ministry, nor an item of any reconciliation with the colonies; nothing but the same process of fire and sword that we had been treated with. Yea afterward, when Governor Penn had been examined before the House of Lords, and the Duke of Richmond made a motion that the last petition from the Continental Congress, should be made a basis for a plan of accommodation; the ministerial party opposed it, and it was thrown out by 86 against 33. And if the petition

petition is taken under consideration after all, it is by constraint, not willingly ; it is because they find that providence has smiled upon us, and frowned upon them, and they know not how to accomplish their cruel designs as they proposed. And is there not all the reason in the world, that we should say that we cannot make the same offer now that we did eight months ago, and that we are not bound by the offer we then made. If A offers B a horse at a certain price, and B does not accept the offer, A has a right to withdraw it, and is not obliged to let B have the horse on the same terms any considerable time after, especially if circumstances are much altered in the mean time, and more especially if the alteration is A's damage, by B's neglect to comply with A's offer at first. This is our case with Britain. We are therefore no way bound by the petition we sent last July.

I come now to offer the arguments for independency, and against our being under British government.

First Argument. By independency we shall avoid tyranny, and oppression. If we submit to British government, we shall be continually cramped with Governors, and other officers appointed by the crown. All those in authority over us, will be such as suit the ambitious designs of Great Britain, however

however contrary to our interest. If we are under British government, we can make no laws to our advantage, unless Britain views them so, and they receive a sanction there. Not a new county can be formed; or choose representatives without leave from home. If we are independent we may yearly choose such rulers as suit us best; but if subject to Britain, we must be under a King that comes by succession, however unfit to rule, which is often the bane of government. If we choose our rulers annually, or once in three years, they are at the end of that time, again put on a level with their fellow subjects, and are liable to be called to an account for mal-administration, which is a great means of preventing mismanagement when in power. But if the government is hereditary, we must take the chief magistrate as he is; sometimes an infant, sometimes with scarce common sense, sometimes inattentive to any public business, like Domitian catching flies; sometimes ambitious, fierce, and cruel, using all the power of the nation, to promote tyranny; sometimes a capricious woman; and

* Should one of our charter governments choose a girl, or an old woman for their governor; and give her the usual salary, would not their money be nobly expended, and their government finely managed? This among other things may serve to shew, that hereditary government cannot be founded in reason and equity.

and however thus unfit to answer the true ends of government, he or she, is not to be set aside. Hereditary government tends to keep a continual opposition between the court and the country: So that a courtier and a patriot are opposite characters, which is the greatest absurdity in nature, if the design of civil government is properly viewed. Rulers are, or ought to be wholly for the good of the people: But how contrary to this, is the case in fact, in many instances! The court and the patriots in continual opposition, has long time been a reproach to a nation that boasts of liberty, and the best form of civil government. What say scripture and reason? If a kingdom, or an house be divided against itself, it cannot stand. Every man that has lived any time in America, under regal government, knows what frequent, and almost continual opposition there is between the country interest and those in power; what jars and contentions between Governors and Assemblies, &c. This may be prevented by keeping clear of British government; and a kind Providence seems now to open a door for it. I have but imperfectly exhibited this argument; but our oppressions, and the incroachments upon our natural rights by regal officers, are so well known to every man that has any

any acquaintance with our public affairs, that I need not enlarge.

Second Argument. By being independent, we shall be much less exposed to foreign wars. Every large kingdom is often at war with neighbouring nations. The avarice, and ambition of a Prince, at the head of a powerful nation, will not suffer it to be long at peace. If we belong to a large kingdom in Europe, we must be at war whenever that kingdom is at war: And some part of America will always be exposed in time of war. But if we are independent, it will be the interest of all the European nations to keep us so, and no one of them will view us as enemies, because they are at war among themselves. Holland often enjoys peace while the neighbouring kingdoms are at war. If we are independent all the nations of Europe will protect and keep us so; for reasons that have before been given. This will be much better than to be under the protection of any one, tho' the most powerful nation in the world.

Third Argument. If we are independent, our taxes will be inconsiderable, compared with what they will and must be, if we are under regal government. A view of the public expences in the Province of

D New-York,

New-York, and the Colony of Connecticut, a few years past, may serve to evince this. If we are under regal government, the Provinces will be dealt out to hungry officers, who will always get what they can. There are so many hangers-on at the British court, who want places; so many reduced gentlemen to be supplied; so many placemen and pensioners, that we shall always be peeled and pillaged, and new methods of raising revenues invented to supply them. A number of such hungry creatures will always be gaping for the places of profit and honor, and their salaries must be as large as possible. But if our principal officers were annually chosen from among ourselves, the expences would be inconsiderable, and the business of government much better done. There are many ways more than I can enumerate, by which our public expences would be encreased under regal government, and diminished by being independent.

Fourth Argument. It will be much easier to settle the present disputes by declaring for independency, than by attempting an accomodation. Should an accomodation be attempted, the views of Britain and America are so very different, if not diametrically opposite, that they could not be made

made to harmonize. The demands of Britain and America would clash to such a degree, as to render a reconciliation impracticable. America would insist upon so many Acts of Parliament being repealed, so many rights and privileges ascertained, such a reparation of damages, &c. many, or all of which things the court of Great-Britain would absolutely refuse, that an accommodation could not take place.

Fifth Argument. If matters are settled by our being independent, the Continental Congress, or the managers of that affair, will be relieved of much difficulty and acquitted with honor; otherwise it is likely they will be suspected of bribery, and loaded with blame and reproach. If a reconciliation is possible, and should take place, there must probably be such concessions on the part of America, as would be very grating to multitudes. And those that were entrusted with the management of the affair, would probably be suspected of bribery, whether guilty or not. If matters are not settled to the satisfaction of people in general, the transactors of the affair will be the objects of much public odium. Some part of the Continent has suffered so much, is so irritated by cruel treatment, and there is now such a prospect of settling things

things well by independency, that it will be impossible to make people think well of the men that shall, without absolute necessity, again subject us to British government. No man need desire to be a member of that Congress, that shall again bring America into subjection to Great-Britain, if it is not the general voice of the country.

Sixth Argument. If we are independent, we shall be less liable to internal tumults and rebellions. Our people have now such a sense of liberty; have been so used to meet, form, and publish resolves, and assert their rights and privileges, and have so well succeeded in our present contest with Britain, that it will be very difficult to prevent something similar for time to come, if they are put under British government; especially if they think it is without necessity, and contrary to their natural rights. Should there now be a patched up reconciliation, and we in subjection to Great-Britain, we might expect nothing but inward convulsions, struggles, and attempts for freedom, till we were either ruined or set free.

Seventh Argument. If we are independent, this land of liberty will be glorious on many accounts: Population will abundantly increase, agriculture will be promoted,

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ed, trade will flourish, religion unrestrained by human laws, * will have free course to run and prevail, and America be an asylum for all noble spirits and sons of liberty from all parts of the world. † Hither they may retire from every land of oppression; here they may expand and exult; here they may enjoy all the blessings which this terraqueous globe can afford to fallen men.

I have thus briefly stated some of the arguments, for and against a reconciliation with Great-Britain: More might be produced, and I doubt not will occur to every reader.—These matters are now exercising the thoughts of many among us: America's reconciliation

* 'Tis not enough to say every religious sect should be tolerated, for no one should be established; and religion in general should be encouraged, and every man not only have the right, but be encouraged to think and judge for himself in matters of religion: While no set or party should be allowed to molest, disturb or encroach upon another, while they were all equally good subjects of the common wealth, and their principles and practice not detrimental to civil government.

† I wish that I could add, that the guilt of slavery would be banished from us; and I cannot but hope that in time it may. What a dreadful absurdity! What a shocking consideration, that people who are so strenuously contending for liberty, should at the same time encourage and promote slavery! And being thus guilty, expose themselves to the judgments of Heaven! May slavery cease in America! Well may the West-India islands be afraid of their slaves, where that unnatural iniquity is so abundantly practised.

reconciliation with Britain is become a subject of conversation, and I think ought to be impartially canvassed. In canvassing this matter, and bringing things forward to a determination, the side of reconciliation with Britain has considerable advantage; because many men in office, and those that hope to be promoted if a union takes place, will exert themselves, use all the plausible arguments and persuasions they can, to lead people to think a union is best; and many of those are men that people have been used to view as leaders and head men, to whom they have often applied for advice. Many men now in power, and others who hope to come into places of profit or honour, will from interested views, use their utmost endeavours to lead people in general, to think that a reconciliation with Britain is best. And it is easy for them to influence and lead many of the populous.* On the contrary the side of

Independency

* Since I wrote the above, I have been told, that there are in almost every county if not town, men employed, and even hired by those who call themselves friends to government, to persuade and influence people as much as possible, to favour and promote a reconciliation with Great Britain. People therefore in general thro' the country, should observe what sort of men are engaged to promote a reconciliation with Britain; whether they be such as expect favour from government, or whether they be such as act with a disinterested regard to the good of the country.

Independency will have nothing to influence, but barely the interest of the country, and people are often too thoughtless of their interest in these matters, 'till 'tis too late. For this reason persons of public spirit and capacity, should at this time exert themselves, and set people's interest properly before them ; avoiding heats and factions, but shewing people the weight and importance of the case, and giving a just view of the state of America.

A N

A P P E N D I X.

TO this piece, was intended, by the author: But as it was not ready when the foregoing observations went to the Press, it was thought best not to delay the publication.

The publisher likewise intended, at the end of the Appendix to have added a note of his own, on a passage marked with an asterisk (*) page 5, and several similar expressions in other parts of the piece on the dependency of the Colonies upon Great-Britain ; which it was apprehended might, by

by less attentive readers, be understood contrary to the design of the author, as if he admitted, that ever there was a constitutional superiority in the people of Great-Britain, over the Colonies, or any legal right at all in the former, to make laws to bind the latter in any case whatsoever. The general design of the piece notwithstanding these incautious expressions shows, that the author never intended to countenance such a doctrine as this; which is equally repugnant to the English constitution, as to reason and justice; for the Colonies always were, are, and ever will be, in rights, privileges, freedom, and internal (exclusive of all foreign) legislative authority, in a state of perfect equality with Great-Britain, or the freest nation upon earth; and were never dependents, not ever will be. But the room here will not admit of a full discussion of the subject.

P L A N

THE PLAN
OF AN
AMERICAN COMPACT,
WITH
GREAT-BRITAIN.

First Published at New-York.

THE capital subject of conversation throughout America for these few weeks past, hath been excited by a Pamphlet, entitled, Common Sense; the author of which endeavours to shew the necessity of our final separation from Great-Britain, as our rights and privileges cannot be properly secured by any mode of reconciliation whatever. None of the answers given to this ingenious Pamphlet, have sketched out any plan of settlement, by which it might appear that our rights and freedom would be fully secured, though again united and harmonized with Britain. That such a compact or settlement is practicable, I think ought to be made apparent to the people of America, before they can be convinced of the propriety of reconciliation;

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tion; and unless this can be effected, I never wish to see the union; preferring, beyond all comparison, the toils and dangers of erecting a free and independent fabric to the delusive promises of freedom, pregnant with the principles of servitude and oppression. But, I think, such a compact, or act of settlement, may be framed, as will secure to Americans the rights of freemen, at the same time that it removes from them the horrors of war, and the desolations with which even victory must be attended. I think no confederate person will deny, that our truly honorable Congress were of opinion such a compact could be formed, when they petitioned the King, addressed the people of Britain, and prayed to the Father of peace for reconciliation with Great-Britain, as the greatest blessing these colonies could enjoy. If such a settlement, in the opinion of the Congress could so lately have been framed, I think no good reason can be given why it cannot now be effected, since the same wise and salutary regulations, which six months ago would have secured us against the inroads of tyranny and the designs of a wicked Ministry, must at this day answer the same important purposes. What were the articles of this compact, which our Congress must

must have thought would be sufficient to secure our liberties, I do not know, it is impossible, therefore, for me to relate them; but sufficient it is, for the purpose of destroying the foundation of independency, to delineate the outlines of a compact, which would reconcile us to Great-Britain, and at the same time secure and preserve our rights and privileges: Such a general plan, or ground-work, is here offered to the public for their consideration.

ARTICLES of the COMPACT.

First. The British Parliament shall have no power to tax the colonies.

Second. The Parliament shall not intermeddle with the internal police of the colonies: Let Britain provide for her own internal government, and the colonies for theirs. By this clause all disputes about invasion of charters, rights of trial by jury, manufactures of the colonies, &c. will be rooted up at one stroke.

Third. The Crown shall appoint the officers of government in the colonies, during good behaviour, and the people of the colonies pay them; by this means the officers.

officers become equally dependent upon crown and people, (as they always ought to be.)

Fourth. The Parliament shall have the regulation of our trade ; but least they may lay heavy duties upon articles of our trade, under pretence of regulating it, and so raise a revenue out of the colonies, they should have no right to the duties, but they should go to, and be for the benefit of that colony from which they were raised, to contribute in paying that colony's taxes, &c.

Fifth. As it is necessary there should be some general power to superintend and regulate the interest of the colonies as connected with and interfering with each other, which no Provincial legislature is competent to ; and as it would be dangerous to give the British Parliament that power least tyranny might enter in at so indefinite a passage, there should be a general Convention, consisting of Deputies from the several colony Assemblies, or from the people, whose business should be to regulate the posts, the general currency, and the proportion of the forces of the colonies, and all other matters in which the separate colony legislatures have not sufficient authority,

city, and which are not contrary to the right herein allowed to the British Parliament. One special business of this convention, should be to keep a vigilant and careful watch over the designs and transactions of the British Ministry and Parliament, that so by an early watch word it may prevent tyranny in its embryo: But as absolute power might in time be assumed by this Congress, were it without any check, its acts therefore should go home for the Royal assent; the Crown to have no power to reject them, or the Provincial acts, unless done within three years after passing here.

Sixth. For our security against the introduction of British troops to enslave us in times of tranquillity, when we had forgot the use of arms, a perpetual standing militia bill should form part of the compact by which means the people of the colonies would keep up their martial spirit, and always be prepared against the attack of arbitrary power: But, as it would be useful, in case of sudden invasion, to have a small number of troops at all times ready to repel such invasion, the King should have a right to send a certain limited number, for instance, 10 or 12,000 upon the Continent, whose immediate exertions might be sufficient

sufficient to prevent an enemy, until the militia could be assembled and brought up. Whoever asserts that 10 or 12,000 soldiers would be sufficient to controul the militia of this continent, consisting of 500,000 brave men, pays but a despicable compliment to the spirit and ability of Americans. More than this stipulated number the Crown should not send without the consent of the general Convention or Congress.

Seventh. In order to prevent bribery and corruption from sapping the foundation of the goodly fabrick, the compact should contain these three clauses, viz. That the Colonies should choose their Representatives and Convention every two years: That they should choose them by ballot; and that no officer or pensionary of the Crown should be elected.

Eighth. As these colonies would be protected by the power of Britain, and would receive all the duties arising from the regulation of trade, the Colonies should stipulate to allow them 8 per cent. upon all merchandizes imported from foreign countries. This would be the easiest of all methods for raising this sum; It would be paid

paid invisibly, and we should even then be gainers, since we should receive a profit of 12 per cent. upon such foreign commodities. If the exigencies of the state should at any time require a further grant, the same should be obtained freely by way of requisition.

These are the outlines of the compact of reconciliation, by which it is apparent our freedom may be amply secured. No doubt many additions may be made to it by the wisdom of our venerable Congregations, and the observations of my countrymen. And since an honorable and secure harmony may again be established between Great-Britain and these Colonies, who would prefer the horrors of war, the ruin of commerce, the destruction of private peace and happiness, and the loss of thousands of our countrymen in battle, to the blessings of peace and tranquillity, the enjoyment of plenty and abundance, the preservation of the lives of our fellow creatures, and all these in the full possession of liberty? And for what are we to encounter all these evils, and untried ways, which like all novel experiments, must be attended with innumerable difficulties, if they should happen to prove successful, and with

with dismal consequences should they miscarry. 'Tis a form of government which Baron Montesquieu, and the best writers on the subject, have shewn to be attended with many mischiefs and imperfections, while they pass high encomiums on the excellency of the British constitution. But why should I dwell upon the dangers of this scheme; the Continental Congress have never lisped the least desire for independency or republicanism: all their publications breathe another spirit; and in their justice, wisdom and virtue I can freely confide, for a restoration of peace and tranquillity upon just and honorable conditions.

F I N I S: